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April 1, 2019

Planning Board
Town of Lexington
1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington MA 02420

Board of Selectmen
Town of Lexington
1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington MA 02420

RE: 186 BEDFORD STREET, LEXINGTON — TOWN MEETING ARTICLE 38

Dear Board Members:

This letter is submitted in support of the amended Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan (PSDUP) filed herewith and with the Town Clerk's office. This amended filing amends our original filing dated December 30, 2018. The Zoning Bylaw (ZBL), *per* Section 7.3.2.4, Provisions applicable to Planned Development (PD) Districts, provides that revisions to the PSDUP may be filed with the Planning Board and Town Clerk subsequent to the Planning Board public hearing, which closed on Wednesday, March 20.

For point of easy reference, I am attaching my letter required in support of the December 20, 2018 filing. This letter will supplement my December 20 letter, focusing on the changes made to the proposal since then and circumstances in the Town process which have resulted in significant public benefit as follows.

The Town planning process started in October 2017 in a meeting with Economic Development Officer, Planning Director and his staff; followed by a meeting with the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager and Department staff; and a third meeting with the Town Manager, two Selectmen and a Planning Board member. Thereafter, in February 2018, two neighborhood meetings were held at the Knights of Columbus (K of C) and Town Hall. A third neighborhood meeting occurred in November following the Ciampa's purchase of the property in September.

A Sketch Plan submittal and meeting with the Planning Board took place on November 28, 2018. At the Sketch Plan meeting in November the Planning Board voted unanimously 4-0 that mixed commercial and residential use is appropriate for this property. The Lexington Housing Production — Affordable Housing: Goals and Strategies, citing Lexington 20/20 Vision and the Comprehensive Plan, recommends housing options to promote diversity of income and age, including smaller-scale housing appealing to seniors looking to remain in Town and to young professionals entering the workforce.

The proposal includes 13 one-bedroom apartments, ranging in size from 500 to 785 SF. These modest sized apartments specifically address this needed housing option. Moreover, 4 of the 13 apartment units will qualify as Affordable Housing Units under the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development's Local Initiative Program. The fact that 30% of the housing units will be Affordable Units will make all 13 units count toward Lexington's subsidized housing inventory; and also help Lexington sustain the 10% affordable to prevent C.40 B developments. The Lexington Housing Partnership has endorsed this project. The commitment to affordable housing is described in detail in a section of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed to with and approved by the Board of Selectmen, to be attached as an Appendix to the amended filing.

The process with the Lexington Historical Commission (LHC) began in December 2018. After implementing several design improvements, on February 20, 2019 the LHC unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the Ciampa's application to preserve the main building, built in 1874 and accessory barn, both listed on the Town's Cultural Resources Inventory; and to replace the 1969 addition with a new addition. Historic preservation is substantially more expensive than full demolition, yet the Ciampas have agreed to bear the added costs. Commission members each acknowledged great improvement in moving the proposed addition 15 feet back from the main building, enhancing the building's historic identity more visibly from Bedford Street.

Historic preservation has long been considered a public benefit in our historic town. The Ciampa's preservation plan complies with the Natural and Cultural Resources Element of the Town's Comprehensive Plan in satisfying preservation incentives for existing structures. The proposal has additional merit when compared to demolition alternatives that inevitably would result if this property remains as zoned RS residential.

Although zoned RS residential, the use of the property for the last 60 years has been institutional, owned and operated by Mystic Valley/Eliot Community Mental Health Center. The property is located directly adjacent to and across the street from commercial uses and zones as shown on the attached overview, including the Alexander's Pizza shopping area, the Philip Ciampa Salon, Evergreen Cleaners, Knights of Columbus, and the former Liberty Mutual office building (now the Lexington temporary Fire Station). See attached overview.

If the property remains zoned RS residential, three new houses could be constructed as of right, likely 7,000 – 8,000 SF each in size, requiring demolition of existing structures and with the prospect of 6 to 12 additional school-aged children. Another as of right use could be a larger exempt institutional use such

as a child-care center, private school, religious center, or other non-profit institutional exempt use.

Notably, Mystic Valley/Eliot Community Mental Health Center occupied the property as a non-profit, institutional use for 60 years, generating no tax revenue to the Town of Lexington. In contrast, the fiscal analysis of this proposal projects new tax revenue of \$100,227 less municipal costs, with a net positive fiscal impact of \$88,335 *per year*.

Other public benefits include a \$50,000 contribution to Town funding for transportation and transportation demand management (TDM) improvements, including but not limited to sidewalk, crosswalk, a bus shelter or other vicinity improvements; and \$2,500 toward public improvements at Garfield Park. Bicycle parking and electric vehicle charging stations are also included the proposed project.

The proposal includes traffic mitigation measures in accordance with the Traffic Impact Study prepared by MDM Transportation Consultants, which concluded that the increase in traffic due to this site redevelopment will be negligible. The Town Engineering Division memo of January 31, 2019 states it is in general agreement with the results of the MDM traffic analysis.

The Ciampa's engineers concluded that the site plan provides for an ample number of parking spaces. It is important to note the the Mystic Valley, Elliot 1969 addition was permitted by the Town for 38 office workers for 44 parking spaces. The peak parking demand is predicted to be 42 spaces, and the site includes 49 spaces. Nonetheless, at the request of the Planning Board, the applicant has agreed to limit on-site residential parking to one space per apartment and to provide off-site parking for employees in the event additional parking is required as referenced in the MOU. Further, there is also a plan provision for an on-site parking reserve of 6 "grasspave spaces," should those become necessary.

The Economic Development portion of the Town's Comprehensive Plan sites as a goal bolstering local service opportunities; and, importantly, efforts should include support for businesses already in Lexington. An "Implementing Action" recommended for Economic Development is to modernize CN District Regulations or creating a new zoning district for neighborhood stores which provide mix by being near the residents they serve and often near the residents of their staff. The Board of Selectmen/Planning Board Economic Development Summit of 2017 noted the loss of retail establishments from 86 to 65 during the years 2002-2012.

The Ciampa Family has been operating their salon business in Lexington since the 1970s. The Ciampa Salon has served a large number of neighborhood and community residents for many years. Philip Ciampa has mentored other salon proprietors whose businesses are in Lexington. The Ciampas will be on-site with their business operation; they are dedicated to having adequate parking as they have been for many years at 185-189 Bedford Street.

The Ciampas have made other important commitments. They have committed to building and design in accordance with LEED Silver standards established by the U.S. Green Building Council, with a focus on sustainability and environmental quality.

The Ciampas will continue their forty-year presence in the community by moving their salon business across the street to 186 Bedford Street. They will use the 1,500 SF of space in the accessory barn for their office, and use a portion of the new retail space for their salon. The barn office premises will not be used for real estate sales as a principal use; but the barn may be used to provide leasing and management services for the Project. Upon request, a meeting room in the barn will be made available for use for Precinct 8 community meetings during non-business hours. Business and professional office use in the new addition will not exceed 25% of that commercial space.

For one and one half years the Ciampas have worked on refining this proposal, and made concerted, good faith efforts in collaboration with Town boards and staff for this proposed planned development and re-zoning; and in presenting substantial public benefits to the Town, have justified a modest redevelopment that Town Meeting Members may feel very good in supporting.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,



Edmund C. Grant

ECG/lsg

Enc.

cc: Philip Ciampa
Joe Ciampa
Tony Ciampa

BLUE = COMMERCIAL ZONES
RED = RESIDENTIAL ZONE

